

Hotel Florence
11111 South Forrestville Avenue
southeast corner of Forrest-
ville Avenue and 111th Street
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-1018

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
20-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ILL-1018

HOTEL FLORENCE

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
20-

Location: 11111 South Forrestville Avenue, southeast corner
Forrestville and 111th Street, Chicago, Cook County,
Illinois.

Present Owner: William R. Fischer, Hotel Florence, 11111 South
Forrestville, Chicago 28, Illinois.

Present Use: Hotel.

Statement of
Significance: This well-preserved hotel was one of the principal
buildings in the company town built by George M.
Pullman for the Pullman Palace Car Works.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners (chain of title):

Legal description of the property: Lot B of Block 1 of the
Original Town of Pullman being a Subdivision of the North-
east quarter of Section 22-37-14 of Indian Boundary Line,
lying east of the Ely Line of right of way of the Illinois
Central Railroad.

The following is an abstract of the chain of title con-
tained in Book 315A, pp. 3, 31, in the Cook County Recorder's
Office.

The Hotel Florence is situated on Lot B of Block 1, which
was made up of four lots that were part of the "center"
of Pullman's model town. Lot A was Pullman Park, Lot C
was the Arcade Park, and Lot D was the site of the Arcade
Building. This property was not recorded by the City of
Chicago until February 18, 1909 when the deed for Lot B
was transferred from the Pullman Company to the Pullman
Trust and Savings Bank (Document 4330484). On April 10,
1909, the property passed from the Pullman Trust and Savings
Bank to Paul C. Peterson (Document 4355861). Peterson in
turn sold to Herman T. Getze on June 9, 1910. (Document
4575999). Getze then sold to William Fischer on September
21, 1910 (Document 4635338). The property apparently re-
mained in the hands of Fischer until his death in 1947
(Document 468/357). William R. Fischer, Jr. became the
owner on December 9, 1948 (Document 14242206) and has con-

tinued in that capacity to the present. The most recent entry of March 27, 1961 records a mortgage agreement between Fischer and the Pullman Trust and Savings Bank.

2. Date of erection: Completed in November, 1881.
3. Architect: Solon Spencer Beman (1853-1914) assisted by Irving K. Pond. Town Plan by Nathan F. Barrett, landscape engineer.
4. Builder, suppliers, notes on original plan and construction of building: See Supplemental Information below.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: The building survives with few extensive alterations. The hotel was enlarged by an addition to the northeast, completed in 1914, which involved closing a window and opening new entrances from the original service wing. The southeast portion of the porch has been enclosed, and one window in the south wall of the bar enlarged and made into a doorway. The bar has later built-in furnishings. Exterior storm porches have been added to the three main doorways, probably at an early date. Two doorways on the south wall of the lobby have been closed or reduced in size, probably at an early date. The ladies room has been remodeled. A chimney has been added on the east side.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Primary Sources:

Chicago Album. Old views of Pullman. Located in the Prints and Photographs Department of the Chicago Historical Society.

Letter from George Pullman to his wife, August 17, 1881. Located in a typed collection of letters in the files of Mrs. O. Phillip Miller, 5757 South Kimbark, Chicago.

Miscellaneous pictures in The Prints and Photograph Department of the Chicago Historical Society.

1. Exterior of housing, Greenstone Church, Florence Hotel and Pullman shops, 1957.
2. Interior of Pullman shops; old views.
3. Town and shops, Free School of Manual Training 1890's through 1916.
4. Old views of town and Hotel Florence during 1894 strike.

Sullivan, Louis H., Address in memory of Solon Spencer Beman, before The Illinois Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, together with a covering letter from Webster Tomlinson, secretary of the chapter. (June, 1915) Manuscript

collection of the Chicago Historical Society.

The Town of Pullman; black leather bound book 12" x 14", containing photographs of the town of Pullman. Located in the Prints and Photographs Department of the Chicago Historical Society.

2. Bibliography:

Andreas, A. T. History of Chicago. 3 Volumes (Vol. III). Chicago: The A. T. Andreas Company, Publishers, 1886. P. 72.

Andrews, Wayne. Battle for Chicago. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946. Pp. 80, 81, 87, 126, 149, 165-76, 219. Photograph, p. 118.
General material concerning George M. Pullman.

Cohen, Jerry. "Timeless Town, A Restful Oasis in Wearying Waste," Chicago Sunday Sun Times, Sec. 2 (September 24, 1961). Pp. 1-3.
Located in the Prints and Photographs Department of the Chicago Historical Society.

Doty, Mrs. Duane. The Town of Pullman, Illustrated. Pullman, Illinois: T. P. Struhsacker, 1893. Pp. 104, 108-09.

Forty-four Cities in the City of Chicago. Chicago: The Chicago Plan Commission, April, 1942. P. 51.

Graphic News. Vol. VIII, No. 11. Chicago, Saturday September 10, 1887). Pp. 168-69, 173.

Industrial Chicago, Vol. 1. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891. P. 172.

Jenkins, Charles E. "Solon Spencer Beman," Architectural Reviewer (February, 1897). Pp. 47-101.

Photographs: view of town and hotel p. 46, interior and exterior of other buildings in Pullman pp. 48-53, also many other works by Beman.

Lillibridge, Robert M. "Pullman: Town Development in the Era of Eclecticism," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians. Vol. XII, No. 3. Pp. 17-22.

Lindsey, Almont. The Pullman Strike. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1942. Pp. 43, 44, 49, 69, 75, 76, 101, 345. Bibliography.

McLean, John, M.D. One Hundred Years in Illinois (1818-1918). Chicago: Peterson Linotyping Company, 1919. Pp. 217-288.

Medsker, Bertha Chadwick. "Our Pullman Pioneers," Series of articles in the Calumet Index, November 24, 1954 to February 28, 1955. Located in the files of Mrs. O. Phillip Miller, 5757 Kimbark, Chicago.

Pond, Irving K. "Pullman-America's First Planned Industrial Town (by a Collaborator and Eyewitness)," Monthly Bulletin of the Illinois Society of Architects. Vols. XVIII-XIX, Nos. 12-1 (June-July, 1934). Pp. 6-8.

Pritchard, E. R. (ed.) Illinois of Today and Its Progressive Cities. Chicago: First National City Bank Building, 1897. Pp. 25, 28, 81-84.

C. Supplemental Material:

1. Doty, Mrs..Duane. The Town of Pullman, Illustrated. Pullman, Illinois: T. P. Struhsacker, 1893.
"This handsome four-story structure is built of Indiana red pressed brick. It stands upon 111th street about three hundred feet east of the depot of the Illinois Central Railroad. It was completed and opened for guests in November, 1881. It has always been operated by the Pullman company, which has a superintendent in charge. This is done to maintain a prescribed standard of excellence for which the hotel is widely known. The rooms of the first floor are finished in cherry and the rooms of the other stories in pine. The building is heated by steam. There are electric fire annunciators in all the rooms and fire escape ladders are provided. The cooking is done with gas. The rooms for guests, fifty in number, are well furnished, the furniture account being debited with \$31,000. The dining room can accommodate one hundred guests at a time, and as many as four hundred have been served at one meal. The wide porches of the hotel fronting the parks on the south west, and north sides are much admired and used by guests. The nearness of Pullman to the central portion of the city not only brings thousands of wheelmen here every year, but many large sleighing and tally-ho parties. The world-wide renown of the city also brings thousands of visitors here. The frequency of trains makes it possible to go either north or south at any hour of the day and 'til midnight. This accessibility aids in making Pullman a favorite resort. The hotel, of course, has telephonic and telegraphic conveniences which are found in all first-class houses. Large and well equipped stables furnish horses and carriages for guests. The site of the hotel embraces an acre of ground, and it is surrounded by broad paved and shaded streets, and the residences of the

town are seen from its broad porches. Artificial stone walks surround the grounds, and the street car tracks pass the structure on the east and north sides. The hotel not only provides for transient guests, but also, accommodates regular boarders." pp. 108-09.

Pictures: Hotel Florence p. 104 (additional views of other buildings included).

2. McLean, John, M.D. One Hundred Years in Illinois (1818-1918). Chicago: Peterson Linotyping Company, 1919.

Hotel's name: "The Hotel Florence named for the splendid daughter of George M. Pullman, now wife of the Governor of Illinois, was the first public building erected in the town. The Arcade, providing for most of the business activities of the new town, was also in course of construction." p. 217.

Beman the City Plan: "He [Pullman] had had occasion, prior to that time, to employ the services of Spencer S. Beman [Solon Spencer Beman], a New York architect, and Nathan F. Barrett, a landscape engineer, in connection with plans for his home and surrounding grounds. . . he directed them to prepare detailed plans for his inspection the next time he should be in New York. These gentlemen did not treat that matter seriously, thinking that the magnificent ideas discussed were only the chimera of a fevered brain. Pullman laughed as he related to me how, on his next trip to New York, he sent a message to Mr. Beman requesting him to come over to the hotel with the plans, how the architect pleaded a previous engagement and asked if the next morning would answer just as well; how, when he found that he was expected to deliver the plans, he worked straight through the night making an outline of the ideas which he had thought were merely delirious dreams; and how, when the sketch was presented the next morning, it was found to be a faithful delineation of the 'dreams', requiring but a few changes. After these were made, the plans were approved and Messrs. Beman and Barrett were commissioned to work them out in detail, not only on paper but on the shore of Lake Calumet, where the town of Pullman was founded in 1880. It was in the year following, and before the public buildings were up, that I settled there." p. 225.

Lake Calumet brick: "One of the factors in the location of Pullman was the fact that the clay on the shore of Lake Calumet was admirably adapted to the making of a fine grade of brick. . . Thus did the town of Pullman virtually rise from the shores of Lake Calumet, the structure being composed principally of these Calumet bricks, the manufacture of which continued after the town was built." p. 229.

Architects and Contractors: "After the site was established and made ready for the shops and buildings, the detailed drawings for the public buildings were made by Mr. Beman, assisted by Irving K. Pond, a Chicago architect who has acquired a national reputation for the quality of his work. The arrangement of the public buildings and the residential district was under the direction of Mr. Nathan F. Barrett, landscape engineer." p. 230.

In addition, A. B. Pullman [brother of George M.] was in charge of the building of the town. Mr. T. A. Bissell laid out the plan. Carpenter work directed by Dan Martin. Brick and masonry construction by R. E. Moss, later by Alexander McLaughlin. p. 231.

The Hotel: "I think he [Mr. H. I. Kimball] had been in the hotel business in Atlanta, Ga., and I deduced from that that he occupied a sort of advisory position with reference to the Hotel Florence in Pullman." p. 232.

"The new town was provided with all of the adjuncts and attributes of a cultured community including schools, churches, library, theater, bank, stores, club and a first-class hotel." p. 233.

". . . George M. Pullman was decorated by the Italian Government for the building of the model city." p. 237.

The hotel was the social center of the town ". . . a mecca for epicures. . ." p. 262.

3. Pond, Irving K. "Pullman--America's First Planned Industrial Town (by a collaborator and Eyewitness)", Monthly Bulletin of the Illinois Society of Architects. Vols. 18-19, Nos. 12-1. (June-July, 1934). Pp. 6-8. An excellent account of the building of Pullman by a man who worked on it with S.S. Beman.

Materials and Style: ". . . the Town of Pullman. . . demanded individual treatment--such as could come from the use of simple materials close to hand. [Calumet brick] Underlying the whole Pullman area was a clay from which a high quality of brick could be made, so that when there developed some sort of comprehension as to the amount of brick the building would require, brick yards were established and the style of buildings - for there is style in the buildings of Pullman - was the outcome of a direct logical employment of a local material in a manner without reference to neighboring or foreign fashions or methods.

. . . There was no attempt in Pullman to produce sophisticated architecture but, rather, to build buildings including shops

and dwellings where human beings could work in comfort and the unostentatious application of the principles of good taste including harmony and unity, then not only the buildings but the town as well were bathed in the essence of style." p. 7.

4. Lillibridge, Robert M. "Pullman: Town Development in the Era of Eclecticism," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Vol. XII, No. 3. Pp. 17-22. An excellent description of the town plan of Pullman as well as the buildings. Map of Pullman: p. 18, pictures: pp. 19, 21, Hotel Florence: p. 19.

"Structurally, the hotel in its asymmetrical and functional plan with its broad veranda skirting the expanded two-story country villa, formed a perfect complement to the nineteenth century conception of the urban park. The two-story red brick structure was crowned with a multitude of chimneys, gables, and dormers protruding from the numerous roof planes. The various facades with their detailing of uncertain style derivation reflect the approach used in much of the contemporary residential work. To a large extent this hotel remains in its original state, complete with rocking chairs before the lobby fireplace and with music box in the parlor." p. 19.

5. HABS Inventory prepared by Joan Chapin, July 1960: The original hotel was built at a cost of \$130,000, and had 70 rooms.
6. Andreas, A. T. History of Chicago. Vol. 3. Chicago: The A. T. Andreas Company, Publishers, 1886.

Biographical sketch of S. S. Beman, p. 72:
Born: Brooklyn N.Y. October 1, 1853. "In 1868, at the age of fifteen, Mr. Beman entered the New York office of the famous architect, Mr. Richard Upjohn, where he remained for eight years. In 1876, he opened an office on his own account in New York City, where he practiced his profession until December, 1879, when forming the acquaintance of George M. Pullman, he was invited by him, to design and construct the new City of Pullman and the extensive car works at that place. During the winter of 1879-80 he perfected the plans for that unique city, and in the following spring the great work of building that place was begun and carried on under his personal direction to successful completion. He is the designer of all the buildings of Pullman, including the arcade, churches, schools, market, hotel, water-tower, etc. besides some thirteen hundred dwelling houses for the employees. In addition to his architectural work, for upward of a year he had entire charge of the affairs of Pullman, excepting the building of cars and the operation of the car-works. . . ."

7. Pritchard, E. R. (ed.) Illinois of today and Its Progressive Cities. First National Bank Building, Chicago, Illinois, 1897.

Short biography, list of works, and photograph of S. S. Beman:

"In 1879 he came to Chicago at the age of 26 to design the model city of Pullman. This vast work, embracing a solid area of more than 50 acres of buildings, has been a great success from an engineering as well as artistic standpoint, consisting of some 1,800 dwellings, besides the great manufacturing buildings, churches, schools, etc., and will always remain Mr. Beman's greatest monument.

A work of similar character, though on a smaller scale, has been carried out by Mr. Beman for the Proctor & Gamble Co., called Ivorydale, where Mr. Beman designed 40 large stone structures for the company's manufacturing plant, besides dwellings for the workmen.

Mr. Beman was one of the board of architects who designed the World's Fair building, and the building for the Mines and Mining was his work...the Merchant Tailor building and others of the Fair were designed by Mr. Beman.

In Chicago, Mr. Beman has numerous examples of his skill as an architect, in the way of office buildings, churches, club houses, railroad stations, schools and fine dwellings; prominent among which may be mentioned is the Grand Central Railroad Station, the Pullman Building, the Michigan Avenue and Wabash Avenue buildings of the Studebakers, the Lincoln, Pullman, Kimball and Torrence residences, Lakeside Club, the classic Christian Science Temple, etc. etc. Mr. Beman also designed the famous Chicago Coliseum building, one of the largest exhibition buildings in the world.

Mr. Beman's practice has extended well over the country. . . .the Public Library at Branford, Conn. At Milwaukee the fourteen story Pabst office building, and the Northwestern Mutual Life Building. At Omaha the 'Bee' building. The thirteen story Pioneer Press at St. Paul, the ten story Michigan Trust Co.'s building at LaCrosse, Wisc., and many other notable structures aggregating in cost some fifteen million dollars all of which was done by him since he came to Chicago." p. 25.

Prepared by Larry Homolka
Historian
National Park Service
Osmund Overby
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
July, 1963

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Built in the 1880's, the Florence hotel has both exterior and interior details typical of the period. It was one of the principal buildings in the carefully planned company-town of Pullman. It is well preserved, with much of the original furniture surviving and in use.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Main block about 105' x 80', 3- $\frac{1}{2}$ stories.
2. Layout-shape: Approximately rectangular main block facing west, with service wing and later addition to the northeast.
3. Foundations: Pale tan limestone ashlar, rock-faced below a smooth-faced water table course.
4. Wall construction: Orange brick, 8- $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 4" x 2- $\frac{1}{2}$ ", running bond, 3/16" wide mortar joints, black colored mortar, smooth faced limestone belt courses at window sill and head heights. Some small panels on west (front) side have diagonally set brick projecting corners which give a textural field.
5. Porches: There is a one-story wooden porch around the north, west, and south sides; square wooden columns, topped with large, bracket-like scrolls support a nearly flat porch roof. A portion of the southwest (rear) porch is enclosed with seven panels of three one-over-one-light, double-hung wooden sash windows, with transoms above. The windows are uniform, but vary slightly in size.
6. Chimneys: Tall brick chimneys with plastered corners and corbelled caps rise flush with the outside walls on all sides, breaking the silhouette of the roof.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Principal entrance at center of west side, secondary entrances on north and south sides. Paired wooden doors, have paneled lower halves and lighted upper halves; light has patterned and colored glass.
 - b. Windows and shutters: One-over-two-light double-hung wooden sash windows; upper sash have large center pane of glass surrounded by smaller panes. Windows have

segmental arched heads with arched stone drip mold over three courses of brick. No exterior shutters, but principal rooms on main floor have folding inside shutters with either louvered or paneled sections. Large elaborate window at stairway landing, colored glass, paneled sections, window seat.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Hip roof over main block broken by several gables, dormers, and corner turrets. Asphalt shingle covering.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Bracketed wooden cornice.
- c. Dormers: Main cornice broken by groups of interesting gables on all sides with gabled or jerkin head roofs. Gabled dormers at attic level.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: First floor: Central hall leads from north entrance to south entrance, lobby at the center at the principal entrance on the west side, bar and game room at the southwest, barbershop and public rest rooms at the southeast, main parlor at northwest, second parlor at the east center, old dining room at the northeast, service wing at northeast. Guest rooms on upper floors.
2. Stairways: Main stairway to upper floors at northwest side of lobby. U-shaped with a landing, originally open well, closed string, paneled-and-molded outside stringer, heavy square balusters with molded faces, molded hand rail, large square newel with molded surfaces and carved panels.
3. Flooring: Oak strip flooring in some rooms, main parlor carpeted. Most public areas on first floor have asphalt tile of a later date.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Main parlor walls are plastered and papered. Second parlor and dining room are plastered and papered over wood wainscot which has molded rail and narrow vertical boarded apron. Other public rooms have similar wainscot with stamped sheet metal walls above simulating a heavily textural, sponged plaster surface. Stamped sheet metal ceilings have small coffered patterns with coved cornices; there is similar sheet metal on the walls of upper floors.
5. Doorways and doors: Principal rooms have wide wooden doorways with double sliding doors, and lattice work transom

grills over drapery rods. Door and window architraves are flat with molded surfaces; the lintel projects slightly and, like a cornice, is supported on small flat brackets or volutes. Paneled doors.

6. Trim: Two cast iron columns in lobby have inventive composite capitals. Two floor-to-ceiling mirrors in main parlor. Pilastered, bracketed doorways between lobby and corridors. Occasionally small eaved panels are set in doorways. Marble topped desk in lobby; cashier's cage and door to manager's office have panels of colored and patterned glass.
7. Hardware: Recessed plates on sliding doors, knobs and butt hinges on swing doors, are brass with heavily patterned surfaces.
8. Lighting: Two original small gas bracket-lamps beside fireplace in second parlor. Other lighting electrical.
9. Heating: Central heating, with radiators recessed under window sills behind cast iron grills. Fireplaces in lobby, game room, and dining room parlors have manufactured smooth gray stone facings, and elaborate wooden mantels.
10. Furniture: Original furniture surviving and in use includes: clocks in barbershop and lobby, fixtures in rest rooms, buffet in dining room, chairs, sofas, tables, lamps and pictures in parlor, and some bedroom furniture.

D. Site:

Orientation and general setting: The hotel, on open level ground, faces west across a small green park toward the tracks of the Illinois Central Railroad. A larger park, about one city block in area, is to the south. Small brick houses surviving from the old Pullman company town are to the east and south. The area to the north is industrial.

Landscaping: Informal, with lawn, trees and shrubs.

Prepared by Osmund Overby
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August 1963

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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FOLLOWS...

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAMMETRIC IMAGES

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LC-HABS-GS05-T-3224-103R	SOUTH ELEVATION
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XEROGRAPHIC COPIES OF COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

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